# Charter of the Network Technology Group (NTG)
# and the
# Network Partnership and Resources Group (NPRG)

## Background

The State/Environmental Protection Agency Information Management Workgroup (IMWG) approved the *Exchange Network Business Plan* (Business Plan) in March 2005. The Business Plan proposed the re-alignment of current Network and Standards governance into a new organization, the Exchange Network Leadership Council (Council). This Council is designed to provide strategic leadership and direction for the Network. The Business Plan also proposed the establishment of a primary sub-group of the Council, the Network Operations Board (Board), whose focus is on supporting the operational "day to day" issues of running the Network. The combined charter of the Council and Board was approved by the IMWG in March 2005 and by the Environmental Council of the States in April 2005.[1]

The charter of the Council and Board authorized these groups to establish standing and ad-hoc subgroups, as needed, to organize and execute their responsibilities. This charter identifies the mission, roles, responsibilities, and composition of two such sub-groups to the Board, the Network Technology Group (NTG) and the Network Partnership and Resources Group (NPRG).

Both of these sub-groups were described in the Business Plan and in the combined Council and Board charter. They are envisioned as the "doers" on the Network, with membership composed of Network implementers and advisors with relevant technical or policy skills. The role of the sub-groups is to help the Network Operations Board execute its responsibilities through active involvement in the day-to-day work on the Network. In the current governance organization, which is superseded by the creation of the Council and Board, some of the proposed activities of the NTG and NPRG are conducted by the Operations, Technology, and Security Group and the Technical Resource Group. Some other responsibilities—particularly those of the NPRG—are new to the Network.

The Board, through its approval of this charter, hereby commissions these groups.

## Missions

The NTG's mission is to, under the Board's guidance, identify, deliberate, and provide recommendations to the Board on operational and technical issues; to implement technical and operational decisions made by the Board; and to provide direction for the management of Network infrastructure resources, such as the help desk and registry.

The mission of the NPRG is to provide planning, analysis, recommendations, and implementation support to the Board (and Council through the Board) on activities such as coordination with Exchange Network Grant Program; emerging funding sources (including work on grant alignment); Network communications, outreach, and education; the support of Network Data Area Strategies; and maintenance of the Network Project Plan.

## Management Relationships

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[1] Available at http://www.epa.gov/oei/imwg/pdf/enlc_nob_charter.pdf

The NTG and NPRG will be official, standing sub-groups of the Board and report to the Board. The state and EPA co-chairs of the NTG and NPRG will serve as four of the ten members of the Board. This arraignment assures vertical coordination through a direct line of authority and decision-making, and empowers the implementers on the Network, as represented by the NTG and NPRG, in the arbitration of operations issues at the Board and Council level. This organizational structure places significant responsibilities on the co-chairs of the subgroups in that they must concurrently manage their workgroups while also participating on the Board.

The NTG/NPRG will work closely with and provide status reports to the Exchange Network Coordinator regarding activities assigned by the Board. The NOB and ENLC will formally establish the relationship of the Exchange Network Coordinator to the NTG and NPRG and amend this charter as appropriate.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

The roles and responsibilities of the NTG and NPRG are tightly linked to the roles and responsibilities of the Network Operations Board, which will direct the work of the NTG and NPRG. Occasionally, the NPRG may provide support directly to the ENLC under the day-to-day management of the NOB. The roles and responsibilities of the Board are described in the Council and Board charter and in the charter, the roles and responsibilities are linked to Network governance functions outlined in the Business Plan. Table 1 links the to the governance functions and the Board's roles and responsibilities, as described in the Board and Council charter, to the roles and responsibilities of the NTG and NPRG.

**Table 1: Role and Responsibilities of the NTG and NPRG as they relate to Governance Functions and the Responsibilities of the Board**

| Governance Function[2] | Responsibilities of the Board[3] | Responsibilities of the NTG | Responsibilities of the NPRG |
|---|---|---|---|
| Provide leadership and direction towards the common vision of the Network and its components. | Act as clearinghouse and final arbiter for all Exchange Network operations and technical issues. Board may elevate selected issues to the Council as merited by their magnitude and breadth of the decision<br><br>Create and maintain the Exchange Network Project Plan.<br><br>Develop and implement Network performance measures. | Serve as a clearinghouse, arbiter, and technical advisor to the Board by researching and providing recommendations on Exchange Network technical Issues.<br><br>Create and maintain a comprehensive internal list of technical issues and track resolution paths | Support Development of the Network Project Plan.<br><br>Support Maintenance of the Network Project Plan<br><br>Develop and support the implementation of Exchange Network performance measures for use by the Board and Council. |
| Work with Partner communities of interest to establish and document clear objectives, opportunities, and plans for using the Network to achieve specific goals. | Per the priority areas identified by the Council, engage communities of interest in establishing Network Data Area Strategies (NDAS). This may include supporting the convening of such groups, developing a template for these strategies, or other activities. | Serve as a technical resource for NDAS development. | Promote and support development of NDAS, as directed by the board. |
| Develop, maintain, and promote data standards. | Manage and support individual standards development efforts by providing resources, direction, and coordination.<br><br>Oversee the maintenance, supporting infrastructure, and continued evolution of existing standards.<br><br>Manage the data standards comment review, approval, and publication process.<br><br>Promote and monitor application of standards in Partner Flow development. | Ensure that approved data standards are incorporated in schema and flow design.<br><br>Provide technical advice as requested by standards development teams. | Address policy issues in the area of data standards as directed by the Board. |

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[2] Governance functions were initially outlined in the Business Plan.
[3] The responsibilities are taken verbatim from the Council and Board Charter

| Governance Function[2] | Responsibilities of the Board[3] | Responsibilities of the NTG | Responsibilities of the NPRG |
|---|---|---|---|
| Identify and develop needed specifications, guidance, and best practices. | Manage the development and maintenance of needed major specifications, as directed by the Council.<br><br>Identify, prioritize, and manage minor revisions, enhancements and additional products as needed.<br><br>Deliberate and resolve policy issues on the evolution/application of these standards and specifications and elevate selected issues to the Council as merited by their magnitude and breadth of the decision<br><br>Identify major findings/trends in standards/format and specifications and use these to inform the Board and Council on needed directions and priorities. | Create and/or maintain technical specifications, guidance documents and best practices as directed by the Board, including gathering input from the EN community on recommended changes to the existing technical documentation.<br><br>Produce policies and best practices for the use of XML on the Exchange Network, including. | As directed by the Board, develop business cases, case studies or other research on the Network.<br><br>Prepare draft, non-technical, policy documents for consideration by the Board. |
| Plan and coordinate the design, development, and documentation of major Network Flows to support their implementation by Partners. | Oversee and manage implementation and resolve day-to-day issues of priority projects as directed by the Council and requested from Network Partners.<br><br>Establish and Maintain guidance for Flow development, design, and implementation, e.g., Flow Configuration Documents and implementation guides.<br><br>Oversee and engage Flow teams by participating in goal setting, providing resources and support, and providing a forum for issue resolution. | Advise and support the Board and flow teams in implementation and resolution of day-to-day operations and technical issues related to priority projects, as directed by the Board.<br><br>Support development of products for priority flows, including<br>• XML schema<br>• Flow Configuration Documents<br>• Data Exchange Templates<br>• Model Trading Partner Agreements<br>• User guides and implementation guides | Advise and support the Board and flow teams in implementation and resolution of day-to-day planning and management issues related to priority projects, as directed by the Board. |
| Inform, influence, and coordinate *Partner* Flow planning and implementation. | Track, publish, and resolve joint and individual Partner Flow statuses and issues and commission/delegate needed additional work<br>• Monitor Partner implementation to ensure the highest practical level of interoperability. | Serve as a technical resource for resolving joint and individual Partner Flow issues, as directed by the Board.<br><br>Coordinate with IPTs to assist in managing interoperability issues. | Serve as a resource for resolving joint and individual Partner Flow issues, as directed by the Board.<br><br>Identify [policy] programmatic, organizational and resource opportunities, challenges and issues |

| Governance Function[2] | Responsibilities of the Board[3] | Responsibilities of the NTG | Responsibilities of the NPRG |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Assess Flow statuses, individually and across the Network to identify opportunities and challenges that merit attention.<br>• Deliberate and, if possible, resolve outstanding operational issues<br>• Ensure that issues identified in flows are linked back to appropriate groups.<br>• Assure adequate technical assistance to implementers. | Identify technical flow opportunities, challenges and operational issues that merit broader attention. Develop resolution options, where possible,. Communicate solutions back to appropriate groups. | that merit broader attention. Develop recommendations to the Board and Council. |
| Oversee and manage the shared Network infrastructure, including the Website, security services, registry/clearinghouses, and other resources. | Planning, implementation, and operation and maintenance of the Network shared infrastructure e.g., operation and maintenance of XML registries.<br><br>Monitor and coordinate the Network Help Desk<br><br>Regularly monitor and evaluate evolving or emerging technologies/ technical standards and the application and implications of these technology/ technical standards on current Network practice. | Maintain Network Registry and Repository, including<br>• Operation and maintenance of the Registry<br>• Planning and implementing major enhancements<br><br>Monitor and coordinate with the EN Help Desk, including developing and maintaining a process for capturing help desk issue and feedback from users<br><br>Support shared resources, including<br><br>Create and maintain EN security policy, including<br><br>Track and evaluate evolving or emerging technologies and monitor partner usages of new technologies | |
| Communication and outreach to the Network community and targeted potential Partners. | Oversee and manage outreach activities as directed by Council.<br><br>Operate and Maintain Exchange Network Website. | Disseminate technical resolutions to the Exchange Network community via Technical bulletins | Develop and oversee effective communications mechanisms with existing and potential future partners.<br><br>Implement the partner outreach priorities identified by the Council and Board.<br><br>Maintain the public web presence of the Exchange Network via the |

| Governance Function[2] | Responsibilities of the Board[3] | Responsibilities of the NTG | Responsibilities of the NPRG |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | www.exchangenetwork.net site, as the primary communications tool and a system of record for Exchange Network documentation<br><br>Recommend and coordinate partner convening and educational activities such as meetings, workshops or training (in coordination with the NTG) |
| Develop and maintain Network resources strategy and budget and identify current and possible future funding sources and opportunities for the long-term sustainability and growth of the Network. | Advise and report to the Council regarding resource expenditures and requirements.<br><br>Manage/oversee the work requested, of its subgroups, by the Council. | As requested, provide resource requirements for Network technical investments. | Coordinate and provide recommendations to EPA on its management of the Exchange Network Grant Program,[4] including:<br>• Collaborating on tracking and monitoring of funded implementation activities;<br>• Ensuring the connection of funded activities to relevant guidance, standards and other partners and activities;<br>• Ensuring that implementation of funded activities is consistent with the strategic direction of the Council<br>• Providing recommendation on aligning Network priorities with grant guidance<br><br>Assess, research, and develop future resource requirements, sources, and alignment, including identifying opportunities for costs savings and partner grant alignments activities. |

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[4] These activities are conducted via recommendations to US EPA, the authorized Federal Agency administering the Exchange Network Grant Program.

# Operating Procedures and By-Laws

**Membership/ Organizational Structure**

Members of the sub-groups will be representatives from partner agencies whose primary responsibilities are Network-related. The main criterion for membership is having relevant expertise and Network experience. It is not necessary to have equal representation from EPA and states in the sub groups because organizational representation occurs at the level of the Council and Board.

Members of the NTG and NPRG will be selected by subgroup co-chairs in consultation with the NOB co-chairs according to a process determined by the States and EPA respectively_. Members will serve at the discretion of the Board. The membership of the NTG and NPRG will be reviewed annually by the Board and the Council to ensure that the composition and skills are adequately carrying out the sub-groups' missions and serving the needs of the Network.

Other participants, e.g., consultants, may participate on the subgroups, but can only participate under the support and direction of a member and will not share the responsibilities of an official member..

*NTG*

The NTG will consist of no more then 12 members. All NTG members will be Network implementers with the relevant technical experience and skills, and many may have already served on the OTS or TRG.

One representative from EPA and one representative from a state will serve as NTG co-chairs; in this capacity, they will also serve as two of the members of the Board. The EPA co-chair must represent CDX. CDX's unique relationship to other Network partners and CDX's technical leadership on many issues, such as security, necessitate a prominent role on the NTG. The state co-chair should be a Manager whose minimally responsible for the directing the state Node efforts.. The state co-chair must be familiar with the Network technical specifications and familiar with the problems generally experienced by node implementers and users.

The NTG will meet at least once a month, and at least two meetings per year should be in person.

*Network Partnership and Resources Group*

The NPRG will consist of no more then 8 members. All NPRG members should be Network implementers with the relevant policy skills. At least one member of the NPRG should be a Tribal representative. Members should have experience with policymaking and planning related to the Network, but they do not need to possess technical expertise. One representative from EPA and one representative from a state will serve as co-chairs; in this capacity, they will also serve as two of the members of the Board. The EPA co-chair should be the Branch Chief from the EPA Information

Exchange and Partnership Branch. The state co-chair should bring expertise in either state funding issues or expertise with several data areas.

The NPRG will meet at least once a month, and at least two meetings per year should be in person.

**Decision Making**

All decisions are made through member voting. The NTG quorum is 6 members. The NPRG quorum is 5 members. Each member has one vote, and a majority vote (of those present) is required to make a decision.